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*Tier One Priority for the New Director of Intelligence  
Prevailing Against Armed Groups*

A Dialogue with

**Prof. Richard H. Shultz**  
Research Director, Consortium for the Study of Intelligence  
Fletcher School, Tufts University

**Prof. Roy Godson**  
President, National Strategy Information Center  
Georgetown University

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*Tier One Priority for the New Director of Intelligence: Prevailing Against Armed Groups* was the title of a presentation hosted by CSIS' Transnational Threats Project on January 14, 2005. Two leading intelligence specialists, Richard H. Shultz, Professor at the Fletcher School, Tufts University, and Research Director, Consortium for the Study of Intelligence, and Roy Godson, Professor, Georgetown University, and President, National Strategy Information Center, conducted the briefing. Professors Shultz and Godson presented findings from their Armed Groups Intelligence Project to participants from the intelligence community, private industry, the U.S. government, and the media.

Extensive research and interviews carried out on three continents by Godson and Shultz drew upon the experiences of intelligence and security services from democratic governments that have effectively confronted armed groups. Former armed group leaders were interviewed to assess their operations against states, and to draw out effective methods and tactics used against them.

Important lessons and practices derived from this research should help strengthen U.S. intelligence tradecraft. Godson and Shultz identified specific strategic options, new intelligence architecture, and new operational approaches to deal with diverse geopolitical environments where armed groups operate. In particular, they determined the capabilities and operational units needed to establish intelligence dominance and reduce casualties and costs in vital areas abroad.

Dr. Shultz opened the discussion by emphasizing that armed groups pose a major threat to the United States. *"We believe they are a long-term security threat...for among other reasons, the environments that create these armed groups, and allow them to grow, weak and failed states, growing ungoverned territory, internal wars with transnational dimensions that are hard to*



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*settle, availability of weaponry...tells us that armed groups will be around for a long time, and that because of the ability to empower themselves they should not be considered a secondary or a transitory problem, they are a tier one problem”*

U.S. intelligence continues to focus on states rather than non-state actors. Non-state actors including terrorist groups, guerillas, militias, and organized criminal gangs pose major security challenges around the world in places such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Colombia--even without possessing weapons of mass destruction. The U.S. intelligence community is dangerously unprepared analytically and operationally to meet this challenge. Lessons from other democracies successful in countering armed groups should be considered immediately.

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